

Message Text

SECRET

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53

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-07 MC-02 AID-05 OMB-01 /079 W

----- 041530

R 081125Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3118

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

S E C R E T KHARTOUM 3610

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, SU, IR, TC, KU, QA, SA

SUBJECT: NIMEIRI BELITTLES GUL DEFENSE CAPABILITY VIS-A-VIS IRAN

1. FOR SOME DAYS LOCAL SOURCES HAVE REPORTED RECENT INTERVIEW (WHICH WE HAVE NOT SEEN) PRESIDENT NIMEIRI GAVE ANIS MANSUR WHICH APPEARED SEVERAL WEEKS AGO IN EGYPTIAN PERIODICAL "OCTOBER". NIMEIRI'S COMMENTS HAVE CAUSED MUCH STIR HERE AND NO DOUBT SUBSTANTIAL HEARTBURN AMONG GULF STATES FOR HE APPEARS TO HAVE BELITTLED THEIR ABILITY TO DEFEND THEMSELVES "FOR ONE HOUR" AGAINST MILITARY MIGHT OF IRAN.

2. PRIMIN RASHID AL-TAHIR IN LATE NOVEMBER SUMMONED SEPARATELY LOCAL REPS KUWAIT, QATAR AND UAE. WE NOW RELIABLY INFORMED HIS PURPOSE WAS TO SEEK ALLAY CONCERN THESE COUNTRIES OVER NIMEIRI'S REMARKS IN MANSUR INTERVIEW ACCORDING SOURCE (WHO WAS BRIEF BY TAHIR HIMSELF), WHAT PRESIDENT HAD IN MIND WAS EARLIER CONCERN EXPRESSED TO HIM BY UAE HEAD SHAYKH ZAYED THAT VIRTUALLY EVER UAE AMIRATE WAS INDEPENDENTLY SEEKING ACQUIRE ARMS WITHOUT PROPER COORDINATION

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WITH UAE. UNCLEAR WHETHER ZAYED ASKED NIMEIRI TO HELP CORRECT

SITUATION BUT PRESIDENT'S UNDIPLOMATIC REMARKS MAY HAVE BEEN INTENDED TO THIS END. IN ANY CASE, INTERVIEW SEEMS UNDERSTAND-ABLY TO HAVE IRKED ARABIAN PENINSULA COUNTRIES, INCLUDING SAUDI ARABIA. SOURCE REPORTS NIMEIRI MADE SPECIAL EFFORT DURING RECENT HAJ TO EXPLAIN TO KING KHALID THAT HIS REFERENCE TO "GULF STATES" WAS MEANT TO COVER ONLY UAE COMPONENT AMIRATES.

3. COMMENT: ZAYED'D COMMENTS TO NIMEIRI CONCEIVABLY REFLECTED HIS DOUFW'S AT THAT TIME ABOUT ACCEPTING UAE PRESIDENCY FOR SECOND TERM. IN ANY CASE, NIMEIRI'S CHARACTERISTIC BLUNTNESS OBVIOUSLY HIGHLY EMBARRASSING TO GOS IN ITS CONTINUING EFFORTS OBTAIN FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM MONIED ARAB STATES. WE HOPE SECURE COPY INTERVIEW SHORTLY BUT MEANWHILE ASSUME CAIRO CAN PROVIDE. BREWER

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